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THE MAGAZINE FOR MANUFACTURERS, DESIGNERS AND RETAILERS

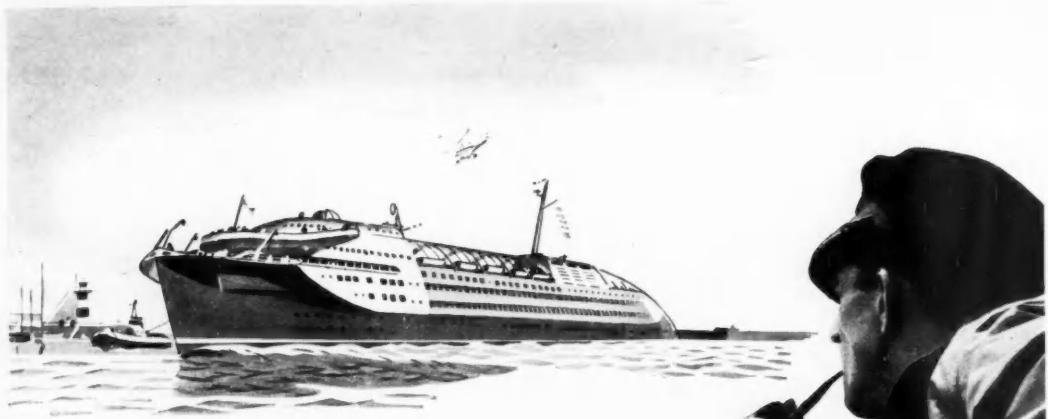


NOVEMBER 1952 NUMBER 47

The Council of Industrial Design

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS





Ships ahoy!

A gas-turbine vessel has crossed the Atlantic.

An atomic submarine can travel up to 2,400 miles without surfacing. We look back to the man in the crow's-nest and forward to . . . what? Ships without funnels, flat as the horizon?

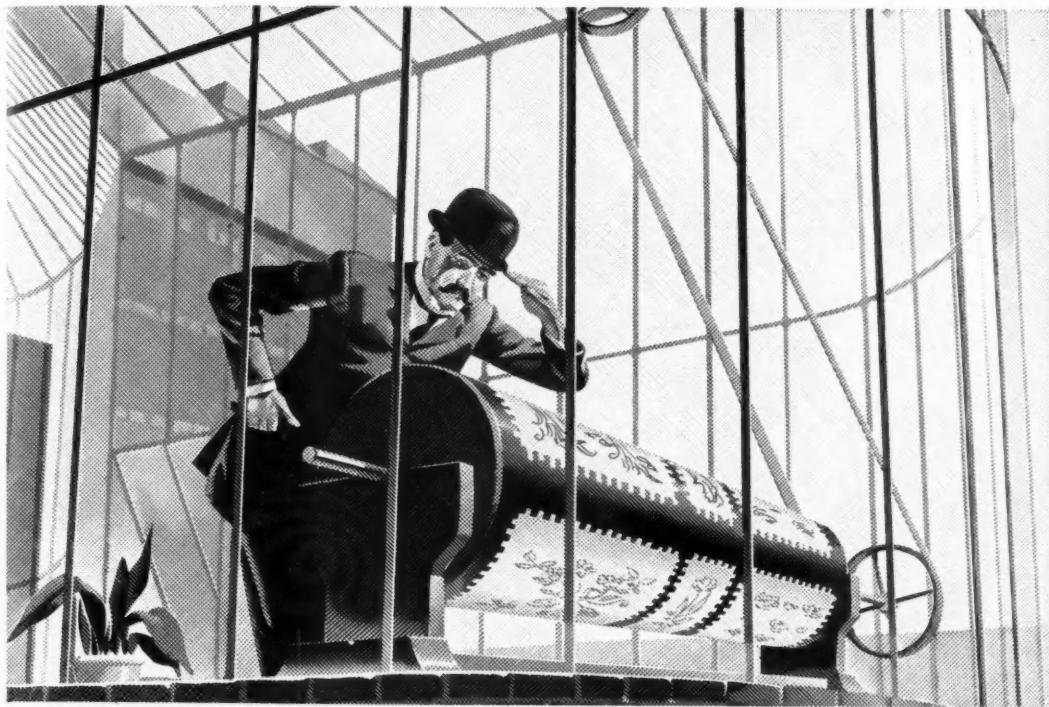
Ships without screws? Ships without crews?

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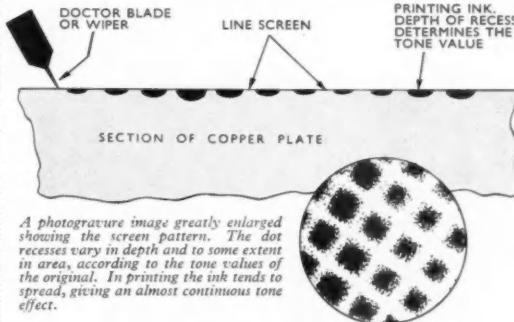
TUBE INVESTMENTS LIMITED, THE ADELPHI, LONDON, W.C.2. (TRAFalgar 5633)



Scene reconstructed by Ray Carson

IN LANCASTER, some eighty years ago, young Samuel Fawcett started work as an engraver of copper rollers for printing designs on oilcloth. A keen photographer, he quickly devised a way of saving time and labour. Using the natural sunlight in his conservatory-like exposing room, he prepared the rollers photographically and etched them by an acid process. Later he began to seek a means of reproducing fine gradations of light and shade. In 1890, when he had developed the system of ink control still used today, he met Karl Klic, an inventor from Austria. In collaboration they set out to apply Samuel Fawcett's methods to the printing of paper, and by 1895 they had evolved the photogravure process — now known throughout the world for the fineness and fidelity of its results. In achieving this quality, an important contribution has been made by the development through the years of the specialised gravure papers produced by the Reed Paper Group. For this is an organisation which has inherited from its founder, Albert E. Reed, a vigorous tradition of paper pioneering. As with gravure printings, so too with kraft, newsprint and other papers, the changing needs of trade and times are constantly anticipated. In this way the Reed Paper Group, with its five mills, has acquired technological experience and technical resources unequalled today in the many-sided service it can offer.

Photogravure is an intaglio process whereby the design is etched into the surface of the printing plate. It gives a true reproduction of continuous tone, varied according to the thickness or depth of ink carried in the etched recesses. After inking, the flush surface of the plate is "wiped" with a blade. A fine screen is incorporated and forms a bridge to carry the blade over the recesses. It was Samuel Fawcett who invented this line screen.



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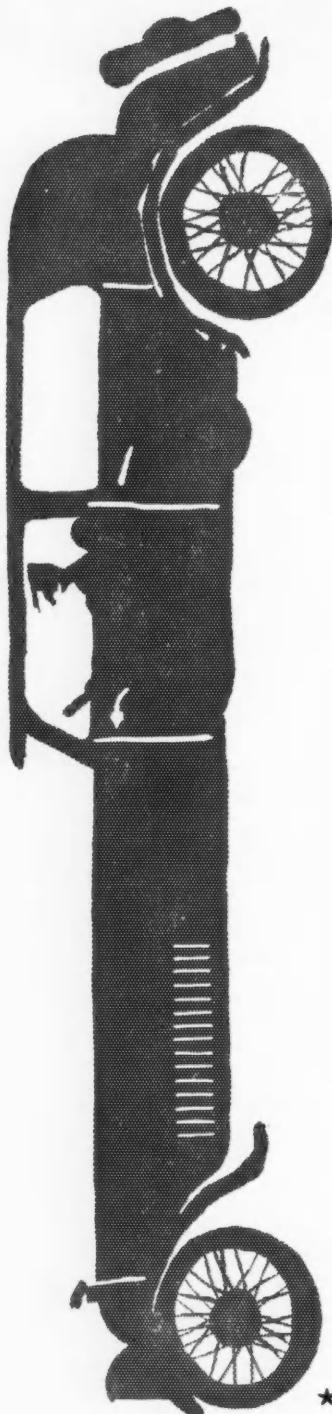
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Design

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FRONT COVER PICTURES

Sideboard at V. & A. Radiation cantilever cooker (page 25)



British Railways

coach (page 17)



Mann Egerton
coach (page 30)

The choice between designers

WHICH TYPE OF DESIGNER is best suited to industry: the consultant or the staff designer? This is no mere academic question: in fact it is one of the vital questions which should be answered, especially by manufacturers. To begin with one can only speak in general terms. The consultant designer is the 'expert' called in from the outside, often from London, even from abroad. The nature of his work allows him to keep in touch with recent technical methods and design trends in several related industries. The staff designer, on the other hand, is usually confined in his outlook on design and experience of industrial methods to one firm. Yet when he produces a new design he has the advantage of knowing that it is exactly suited to his firm's systems of costing and production, and to its market. In very rare cases the staff-designer is one of the directors and in a position to ensure that a design which embodies the best technical and aesthetic standards he can envisage, reaches the production line intact. Compared with this type of designer the consultant is less 'desirable', although it is clear that coming as an outside expert, paid a special fee for a particular job, he is able to command much greater respect from factory executives than the many staff designers who have little authority.

The problem is one which each manufacturer must solve for himself. Again speaking in general terms, it seems that in those industries which require a large number of new designs each year for relatively short production runs (carpets, furniture, light fittings, jewellery) a permanent designer is necessary, while in firms with few designs and long production runs the consultant is frequently the most economical designer to employ. In some firms both types are used, but in such cases one often finds that the consultant secures the most interesting jobs, while the staff designer is left with the hack work.

The disadvantages subject to each type of designer are not slight. There are still a great many firms where the staff designer is left to stagnate in a poorly equipped studio and denied the freedom to experiment and to travel. One also hears of cases where the consultant lacks the technical knowledge necessary to raise his status above that of a stylist: a man concerned only with outward appearances. The uncertainty which now faces a manufacturer anxious to employ a designer might well be removed if this question could be discussed more fully.

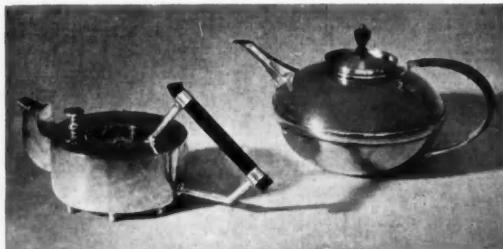
M.F.

Decorative Arts

1837 to 1910

TO FIND THAT THE VICTORIANS were producing designs in many ways acceptable to our taste today is one of the many exciting experiences to be gained now in an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum. The exhibition, entitled Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Arts, is open until January 18. In scope it covers hand and machine made articles dating from 1837 and so deals with a period which is little known, and, going on the evidence of the catalogue of the Great Exhibition of 1851, generally condemned out of hand. What is illustrated on this page suggests that the imaginative use of materials for functions that have not changed, inevitably produces designs that satisfy us, as they no doubt satisfied their Victorian owners. But at the same time, it is plain that these designs were 'advanced', for in their style they represent the beginnings of the modern movement in architecture and industrial art.

I



Design FOR DECEMBER

- Some features in next month's issue
- DESIGN POLICY and practice in the Potteries
- Trends in wrist-watches
- Lightfittings design problems
- Experiments with rubber upholstery
- Review of current design



4



5



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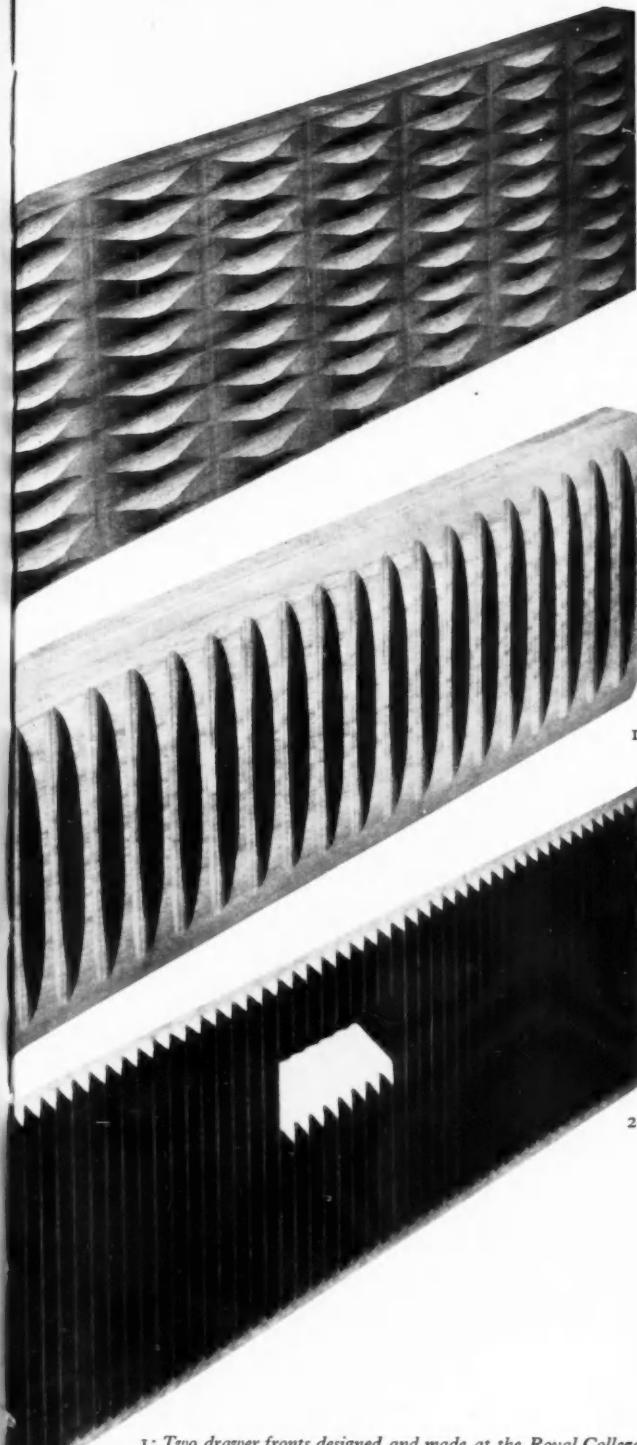


3

1: The left-hand teapot by Christopher Dresser, 1880, suggests a relationship with the modernistic designs of the 'twenties; the right-hand design by W. A. S. Benson, c. 1890, uses a shape hardly altered in several modern versions. 2: Sideboard by E. W. Godwin, 1877. 3: One of the rare examples of work by W. R. Lethaby, 1899. 4: This covered vase by Izaac Barnes, Birmingham, c. 1870, shows a Venetian influence. 5: The glass and silver jug, left, by Christopher Dresser, 1879, is more advanced in design than the ornate example by Omar Ramsden, 1903. 6: This table by E. W. Godwin, designed in 1874, was produced in considerable quantities by William Watt.



6



1: Two drawer fronts designed and made at the Royal College of Art by R. C. Hermitage.

2: A drawer from a storage unit designed by R. D. Russell and R. Y. Goodden, made by H. Morris and Co Ltd.

C. G. Tomrley

Contemporary Decoration for Furniture

Many of those architects who had made a contribution to the revolutionary but austere building styles which reached a climax in the late 'thirties have, since the war, striven to combine subtle proportion with surface decoration: functional simplicity with 'useless' ornament. Furniture designers, with much greater hope for individual variation, have followed a similar trend. And yet the trade with which most of them are intimately connected, and the public which all of them serve, are not aware of the types of decorative contemporary furniture which machinery can provide.

A REACTION AGAINST THE over-ornamentation of furniture in the Victorian era led to the squareness and bareness of the early 'contemporary' furniture of the 'thirties, which depended almost entirely on proportion and finish. Since that time a second reaction has set in, towards what might be called 'shape interest', but even today it is too early to discern a trend towards the use of true ornament in furniture. Contemporary furniture nowadays calls for close attention to its form, proportions, weight, balance, the interplay of void and solid, and the shaping of various members. If an observer's eye is trained only to the appreciation of patternwork such as carving, marquetry, inlay or fancy veneers, it is difficult for him to appreciate contemporary work. Those whose tastes run towards the monumental, and like to see solid masses, find the thin skeletal

shapes of contemporary work unattractive and unimpressive. A large number of people like pieces of furniture which have some of the qualities of small buildings, standing firm and solid, covering squarely the floor they stand on, and the wall they stand against. Their very bulk is their important quality.

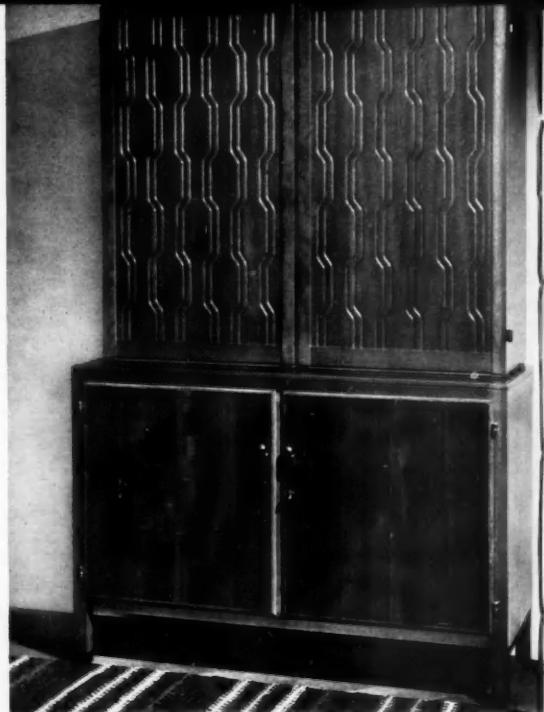
Such preferences are not a matter of good and bad taste, or even old and new taste. Some solid, non-skeletal furniture we must have; the important thing is to make it as useful as possible by careful planning, and as elegant as possible by careful detailing and judicious decoration, 3.

Furniture decoration is of two kinds: the enrichment of structural members and the patterning of surfaces. The use of either depends largely on the material of which the furniture is made. At one time the decorative treatment might have been chosen first and the materials to suit it afterwards. Nowadays, however, we have to find methods of ornamentation to suit our materials, consider whether we can afford to use them, and, lastly, find the skill for their execution.

Using plywood for decoration

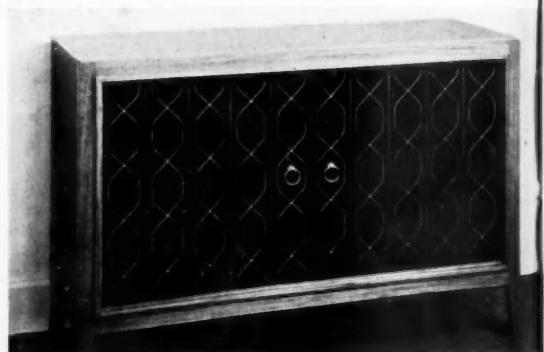
Among the materials at present in use plywood is one of the soundest. Those people who still scorn all but solid timber should be made aware of the many possibilities of plywoods and special laminated boards. So far, little effort has been made to exploit the possibilities of plywood, plywood materials and laminates generally. It has been thought wiser not to draw attention to them. In fact, the use of decorative veneers is paradoxically one of the methods used to keep the customer's eye upon 'woodiness' ('such a lovely bit of wood' is a far more common remark from the customer than 'such a lovely bit of veneer'). To the initiated a display of contrasting figure and cross-banding implies complicated presswork and, possibly, an overstrained technique which may give future trouble through the lifting or 'blooming' of the veneer and scratching of the polish which brings out the figure.

Recently, however, there have been interesting examples of a different treatment of laminates. In one case the plywood material used for a chair itself was composed in a particular way to give a special effect, 7. The legs, rails and other members which were elegantly turned and shaped were made from a laminate of resin-bonded wood similar to that used for propeller-blades. In the material alternate plies were deliberately light and dark, so that in tapering a spindle, for example, ovals developed automatically and were as decorative in their way as any eighteenth century carving or bamboo shaping. The same quality may be seen in a piece of sculpture in a heavily striated wood; an inner layer works to the surface, forming a series of decorative rings following the contour.

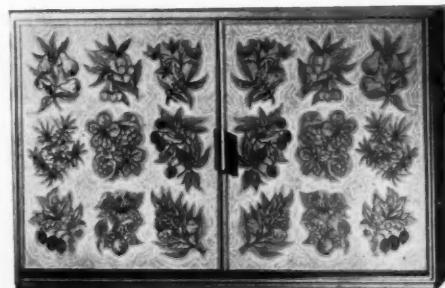


3: FUTURA furniture by Nordiska Kompaniet.

4: Sideboard designed by Booth and Ledebour, made by Gordon Russell Ltd.



5: Chest designed by Directorate of Furniture Production of the Board of Trade. Decorated panels designed by Enid Marx.



Another treatment of ply-board is to coat it with one or more contrasting decorative veneers or coloured surfacings and incise it with a router. As the cuts go deeper the different layers are contrasted. The effect is, of course, linear, and hitherto the method has been used for a simple repetitive pattern of intersecting tracks, 4.

The router is a tool with great possibilities. Some developments which deserve attention have been initiated at the Royal College of Art and the Beckenham School of Art, both of which have well-equipped workshops where experimental work in particular is encouraged. In the trade the router, as its name implies, is most commonly used to rout out a background. The shapes left standing may afterwards be hand-carved, and in such cases little trace will remain of the characteristic work of the router. In the experiments lately carried out an attempt has been made to utilise the effect of the characteristic cuts of the router head. A clear example is the hog-backed drawer-fronts, 1. According to the section of the plank or moulding used, the router will produce cuts which vary as the wood varies in shape. It is possible that for short runs gouge-cutting by hand may be as fast, but for long runs, where the time used to set the machine is balanced by the quantity produced, or where carving skill is not available, the router may well have a future. It is a direct development of the traditional chip carving. It could be used on certain types of laminates with new effects, especially if it cut into coloured layers. Router-cut linear patterns have not yet to any extent been filled with colour and polished. Indeed, colour as a means of enriching contemporary quantity-

produced furniture has hardly been tried.

Recent experiments in colour have almost all been dependent upon the use of somewhat costly plastic sheet as a surface or veneer. Some of these sheets incorporate textile-like designs, 5, which have been highly successful, particularly for children's furniture, 6. The durability of the surface, combined with the bright clear colours and the freedom of design possible, offer unique opportunities. For mass-produced furniture this method might be inexpensively used for small plaques or inlaid shapes, not unlike the enamelled medallions on Prince Charles's cot, 8. A special sheet could be manufactured in the manner of a sheet of postage stamps, and each repeat could then be cut out for separate application. The use of a cut-up sheet to give the appearance of a specially-designed façade is well illustrated in the chest-of-drawers, 9.

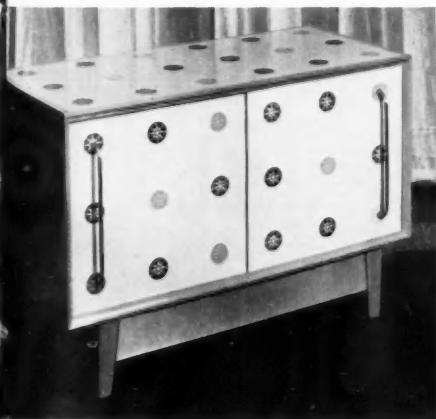
Contemporary inlays

There have been some experiments in the use of inlay for contemporary furniture. Examples are the sideboard inlaid with cross-cuts of marrow-bone, 10, and a table-top inlaid with sections of aluminium tube, 11. In the first case, hand-shaping of the cavity was required; in the second a brace-and-bit was used: a technique which could be adapted for inexpensive series production. Lengths of special material could be made up for cutting into thin slices (jam-roll principle) for use as inlaid patterns. They could take the form of long rods, circular in section or star-shaped, oval or fluted, and turned in their length to give larger or

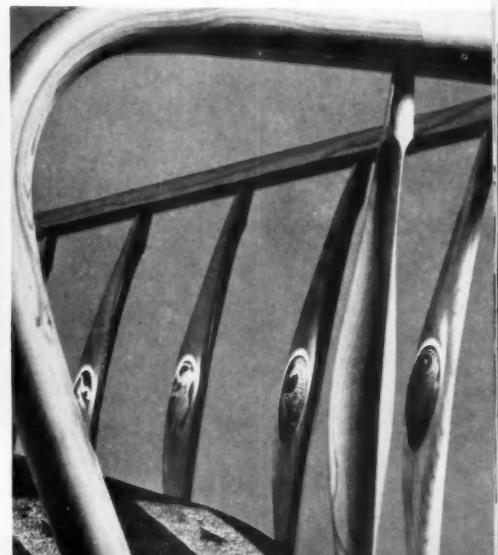
6: Nursery furniture designed by Neville Ward and Frank Austin, made by H. & A. G. Alexander and Co Ltd. Decorated panels by Enid Marx.

7: Dining-room chair designed by Basil Spence, made by H. Morris and Co Ltd.

8: Cot for Prince Charles designed by Frank Gill (medallions by Philip Popham), and made by students at the Royal College of Art.



Design: Number 47



smaller elements. Indeed, since metal can be used, any of a multitude of materials, shapes and sizes could be applied in this way. The inlaid grip used for the shaft of a standard lamp, 12, gives an indication of what is possible. Sticks like these could be channelled or shaped after manufacture in a cutter; standard plastic or aluminium extrusions or sections could be sliced, as many of them offer interesting but unintended decorative usages. A study of Tonbridge Ware might be rewarding, since the 'stock' veneered patterns used were made from thin slices cut across bundles of differently coloured slivers of wood.

French furniture makers often use inlaid ceramic plaques, either flat or in coloured low relief. The recent development of vitreous transfers for pottery and glass suggests the possibility of specially-produced decorative medallions, or knobs. The type of ware used for porcelain insulators would be suitable for the latter. Restraint in the use of these contrasting materials would, however, be essential.

Decoration on structural members

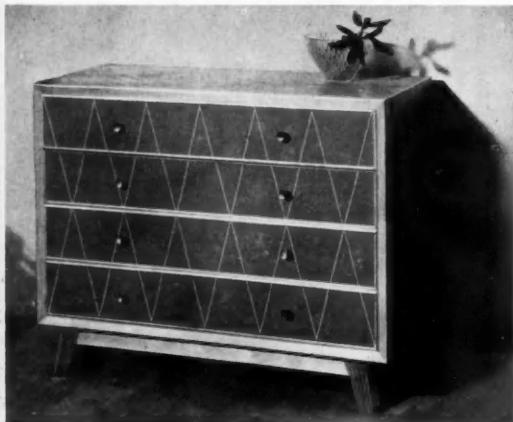
So much for surface decoration. The structural members of most British contemporary furniture are made of solid timber and therefore suitable to the traditional decorative treatments, carving and turning. It is surprising that turning, so beautifully used by Gimson, 13, when lightness and fineness were in demand, has not again come into general use. Perhaps the restrictions imposed by Government controls in part account for this, and there may well be a lack of skilled wood-turners. This treatment does, however,

deserve the close attention of the furniture schools. The lathe is a well-developed mass-production tool and to extend its uses would seem a promising means of achieving decorative effect. Fine turning would be completely in accord with the present trends in furniture design.

Carving, too, has its possibilities for contemporary use. Here there is much need for new thought, since the classical tradition still comes between the carver and his material; many of those who have been taught to carve well are still bred upon acanthus leaves. One cannot force a new tradition into being. One can only ask that those who use a carving gouge should also use their own sense of fitness. A careful study of the members which make up the character of our own, the Scandinavian and the Italian contemporary furniture would show that they lend themselves to carved treatment. Flowing directional grooves, flutes and possibly bandings such as spirals and twists designed for the machine offer abundant scope. Ornament upon the legs, frames and stretchers of modern tables, chairs and cabinets can reinforce their contemporary character and, moreover, run in the same vein through other pieces, since all have similar structural members. The work involved in such forms of decoration, if good modern machines are available, is unlikely to be more costly than that involved in the making of turned 'Tudorbethan' legs and stretchers from built-up and glued-together material.

There is a vast difference between the kinds of decoration described and classical ornamentation by means of decorative mouldings such as the egg-and-dart. The former is dynamic, the latter static. Any ornament which is found on neo-classical buildings

9: Chest of drawers designed by Ian Henderson, made by Story and Co Ltd.



10: Sideboard designed by R. D. Russell, made by Gordon Russell Ltd, and shown in the Exhibition of British Art in Industry 1935.



should be eschewed, if one wants to avoid the more cramping effects of that tradition. On the static, square furniture previously referred to, the use of static ornament is likely only to add an effect of bogus classicism and make the piece yet more monumental. The contemporary equivalent is surface enrichment. For instance, the effect of enrichment is obtained in 14 by alternating strips of yew and mahogany; the yew being slightly sunk for added decorative effect. On page 7 (2) the gouge-channelled mahogany gives texture to the drawer-fronts. The cabinet, 15, is a simple example of close integration of structure and decoration. The doors, composed of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch good quality Gaboon plywood faced with $\frac{3}{16}$ inch thick mahogany, provided a useful field for experiment with the moulding spindle which was used to work the flutes. In the mirror frame, 16, ordinary material, thin plywood, is used decoratively. It is veneered with walnut and glued with synthetic resin adhesive to a frame. The top and bottom members each comprise two pieces of wood, a straight inner one and an outer one bandsawn to a wavy line. The plywood is applied under pressure, the waste pieces from the bandsaw cuts being employed at the outer edges as pressure blocks.

The methods described here contrast markedly with the types of moulded and cut ornament at present in vogue in the trade. The pressed-mouldings for tacking on to plain surfaces and built-up legs are travesties of the ancient craft of carving, and are cheap and convenient treatments with no respectable future. They lower the standard of design in the furniture trade.

New thought is needed on this subject. Any effective development must certainly be coupled with developments in materials, such as ply-boards, built-up plywoods, plastic boards and sheets, building boards, paint and enamel finishes, metallised finishes, metal and plastic sections and so on. The scope is enormous, but the key word governing the necessary design research should be 'legitimacy'. Each material by its own characteristics suggests appropriate decorative uses; drawing-board designing must come only after much workshop experiment.

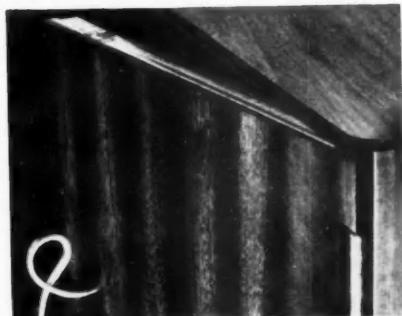
11: Table designed and made at Beckenham School of Art by J. A. Todd.



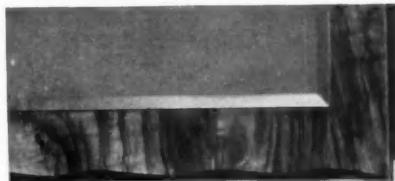
12: Lamp designed and made at the Royal College of Art by Alan Irvine.



14: Sideboard designed by R. D. Russell, made by Gordon Russell Ltd.



15 and 16: Cupboard and mirror frame designed and made at Beckenham School of Art, by F. P. Woodington and R. A. W. MacKilligan.



13: Chair designed and made by Ernest Gimson.



REVIEW of CURRENT DESIGN

This feature offers a selection of goods up to the standard acceptable for 'Design Review', the photographic index of current British products that is open for inspection at the London headquarters of the CoID. Recent visitors include foreign buyers as well as retailers, architects, interior designers, purchasing officers, exhibition selectors and members of the Press. Manufacturers in a wide range of durable consumer goods are invited to submit their new products for inclusion in 'Design Review'. Enquiries should be addressed to Mark Hartland Thomas, Chief Industrial Officer, Council of Industrial Design.



LEFT: In this plastic condiment set the depression for finger and thumb has become the leading element in the design. To take an important functional aspect and develop it aesthetically is one of the most successful formulae for the designer. Designer: W. Bruce Brown. Maker: Halex Ltd.



LEFT: Flower vase in salt-glazed stoneware. The shape has the true quality of a clay product, and it lends itself to modern ideas in flower arrangement. Designer: William E. Gordon. Maker: Walton Pottery Ltd.



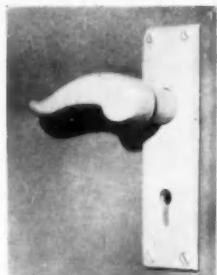
LEFT: Laminated wood platter, natural wax finish. Inspiration from abstract painting and sculpture is manifest: and it is proper for the press-mould to depart from the circular shape of turned work. The modest style enhances the fruit. Designer: Neil Morris. Maker: H. Morris & Co Ltd.



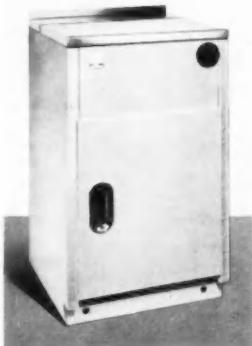
RIGHT: Cafeteria double tray in PERSPEX for British Railways Hotels Executive, but available generally to order. Given the need for saucer depressions, the curves are sympathetically handled. Designer: Rodney Hooper. Maker: Lacrinoid Products Ltd.



RIGHT: The lips indicate that these bone china plates are for fruit or cake to be passed from hand to hand. Note how the sgraffito decoration enhances the shape: shallow perspective for a shallow plate and lines responding to the profile. Designer: Susie Cooper. Maker: Susie Cooper China Ltd.



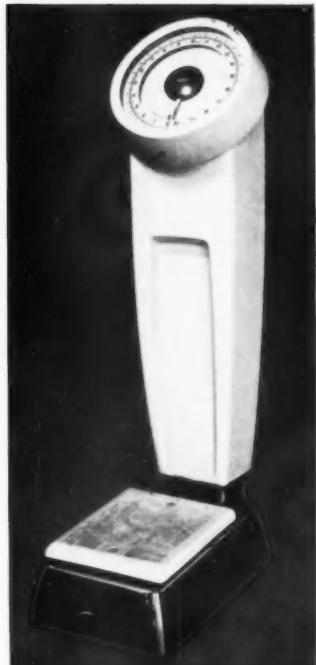
LEFT: Plastic door handle set. The rounded shape is appropriate to the material and does not attempt to rival the slenderness of metal. The scroll is without definite horizontal axis so that, if the spring gets weak, a dropped handle will not look amiss. Designer: Rodney Hooper. Maker: Lacrinoid Products Ltd.



LEFT: Solid-fuel continuous burning boiler with the unusual provision of a simmering plate for casserole cooking. The slight overlap of the sheet-metal door pulls the design together, solving a problem that has baffled many other designers in this material. Designer: A. C. Hazel. Maker: Hursel Ltd.



LEFT: The very strong V-construction of this stacking table makes a virtue of the off-set legs, which are necessary for stacking but usually so awkward in appearance. The top is of WARERITE; the drawer-unit may be separately attached. Designer: Robin Day. Maker: S. Hille and Co Ltd.



RIGHT: Penny-in-the-slot weighing machine. A circle for the dial and a rectangle to stand upon are logical and traditional. The designers have stated these with simple clarity and then carefully modelled the post to join the circle to the square. Designer: Allen-Bowden Ltd. Maker: W. & T. Avery Ltd.



LEFT: Gas trivet in vitreous-enamelled cast iron. Rounded corners and a fairly constant thickness of metal are obligatory for these materials. The designer has taken advantage of these characteristics to give easily cleaned surfaces and graceful modelling. Maker: Sidney Flavel & Co Ltd.



RIGHT: This fabric in grey, yellow and black has a design in which the stylised drawing of fruit on angular panels, relieved against broken stripes, has sparkle and depth without departing from the essential flatness of a piece of cloth. Designer: Pat Albeck.

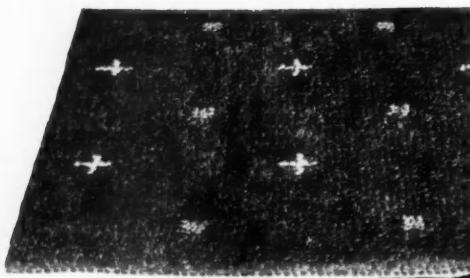
RIGHT: Lime, black, bottle-green and slate-grey on white are the colours in this design which contrasts naturalistic and geometrical patterns. Designer: Colleen Farr.

Both fabrics were designed by students of the Royal College of Art for Horrockses, Credson and Co Ltd.

Review of current design continued



LEFT: Rug made with strips of cloth for the weft. The example shown is grey and white, but a wide range of brilliant colours and different textures is available. The simple theme of stripes would go well in many different rooms. Maker: Michael Abakan.

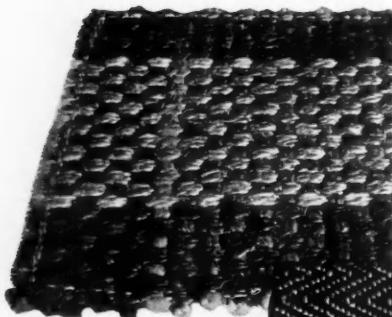
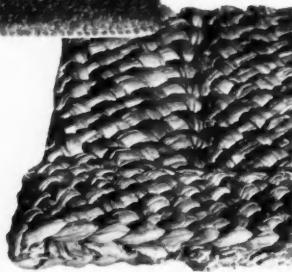


LEFT: This is the style of carpet that British manufacturers used, until recently, to make only for the Scandinavian market. Now, fortunately, some are on sale at home. The dainty little spot motif adds a touch of emphasis to the texture of a plain carpet. Maker: Ian C. Steele & Co Ltd.

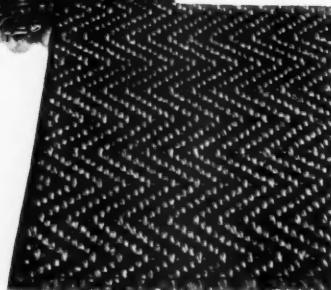
BETWEEN: Rush matting of a large texture - the mesh is $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch - and flowing pattern. The imaginative handling of the design lifts the material out of its usual workaday class. Maker: The Waveney Apple Growers Ltd.



LEFT: A formal pattern in brown, small in scale (repeat $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches), gives a slight addition of warmth and scale to this Axminster carpet, without departing much from the plain grey. Maker: Blackwood, Morton & Sons Ltd.



LEFT: Fibre matting in square patterns using dyed and natural colours: repeat $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The firm rhythm of the square design is useful in giving scale to a furnished room. Maker: Green Brothers.



LEFT: Woven sisal floor fabric. The example shown is a vigorous black-and-white design from a range including reds and greens in chevron pattern, as here, and checks. The simple logic of warp and weft makes a strong design that can be a great help in giving character to an interior. Maker: British Ropes Ltd.

Ian Colquhoun

DESIGN for RAILWAYS



The design standard of railway equipment has been a target for adverse criticism for many years. From the London terminus to the village halt, the first class carriage to the tavern car, it has not been difficult to find a bewildering assortment of unrelated styles. Although the general situation today appears to be similar, there are many improvements to note. As Mr Colquhoun explains in the following article, the scope for introducing better designs is widening every year.

THE ARCHITECT'S OFFICE of the Railway Executive, consisting originally of the architect and three assistants (later five), was established early in 1949. While the regional offices continued to handle their own design and building work, the purpose of the new office was to advise the Executive on architectural and general design matters; these included the interior treatment and fittings of the new standard corridor coach, and a wide variety of standard buildings and articles such as signal-boxes, platelayers' huts (site-built and prefabricated), first-aid rooms, lamp-posts and line-side furniture (mile, boundary and gradient posts). In addition to this, day to day work now includes designs for use by the new British Railways Staff Association, and many other small jobs apart from architectural work.

Generally speaking the railways are still suffering from the wear and tear of the war years. Shortage of materials and labour, and in particular limitations on capital expenditure, mean that old rolling stock and out-of-date buildings have had to be maintained long beyond their economic life. Unlike a comparatively wealthy private company the railways are not able to spend money on design for prestige purposes alone, nor is it possible under present circumstances to plan ahead with any certainty. From this it follows that continuity of development, essential for good design, is lacking. As it takes several months to produce a satisfactory new moquette or metal fitting, it has often

been necessary to be content with existing designs or with early prototypes. And yet, in spite of these drawbacks, some progress has been made.

The method of working varies with the type of job. In the case of rolling stock the office works directly between the mechanical engineer's department at the Executive and the carriage and wagon works of the particular region involved; Swindon, Derby, Eastleigh, etc. At the same time it consults with manufacturers over any special items which are made outside the railway shops. Where a job such as the platelayers' huts or the Staff Association's badges involves many thousands of clients designs are submitted to committees which include trades union and other interested representatives.

The standard coach

In the design of rolling stock the first step is usually the conversion of an existing coach or the construction of a mock-up in which the new ideas can be demonstrated. This mock-up can then be redesigned as often as is required and, after having been inspected and approved, it forms the basis of a building programme.

A large part of the time available during 1949 and 1950 was taken up with the design of various fittings for the new standard corridor coach and dining car which were to go into service on the main lines in

1951. A standard underframe and steel body had already been designed after consideration of all the existing regional stock, and the type of seating chosen. To follow this, the interior design committee, which included the architect, inspected regional fittings and equipment.

Amongst the work undertaken the architect's office was responsible for choosing several veneers for use in the compartments, corridors and dining cars. Very light-coloured woods were avoided because they tend to mark badly in service, and a high-polished surface was abandoned in favour of a finish which was semi-matt. A new linoleum pattern was produced for the architect, and certain of the fittings were designed specially. These included the door handle, 1, heater control, shoulder light, 2, and a bulkhead light fitting for the end vestibules. The door handle, heater control and the back-plate for the shoulder light were originally brass castings with a satin chrome finish suitable for manufacture in the railway shops. But, owing to the shortage of nickel, they were later made in aluminium alloy. In view of the limited light available the shade for the lamp had to be as translucent as possible and was therefore made of non-inflammable plastic material.

The moquettes were also designed in the architect's office, but these, with subsequent developments, will form the subject of a later article. A new first class compartment rug was designed to succeed the existing 'banknote' pattern.

Monogram design problems

Various ideas were considered for the rug until a monogram of the letters B R was worked out in two versions with either a single or a double vertical stroke. This was then doubled, back to back: the second monogram reversed to give a more balanced figure. To achieve this the upper and lower halves of the B had to be symmetrical, and the letter R made to conform, so that the centre lines of the design should also be symmetrical.

The carriage door handle, 1, and the back-plate for the shoulder light, 2, were originally designed as castings, but later made in aluminium alloy. The light shade

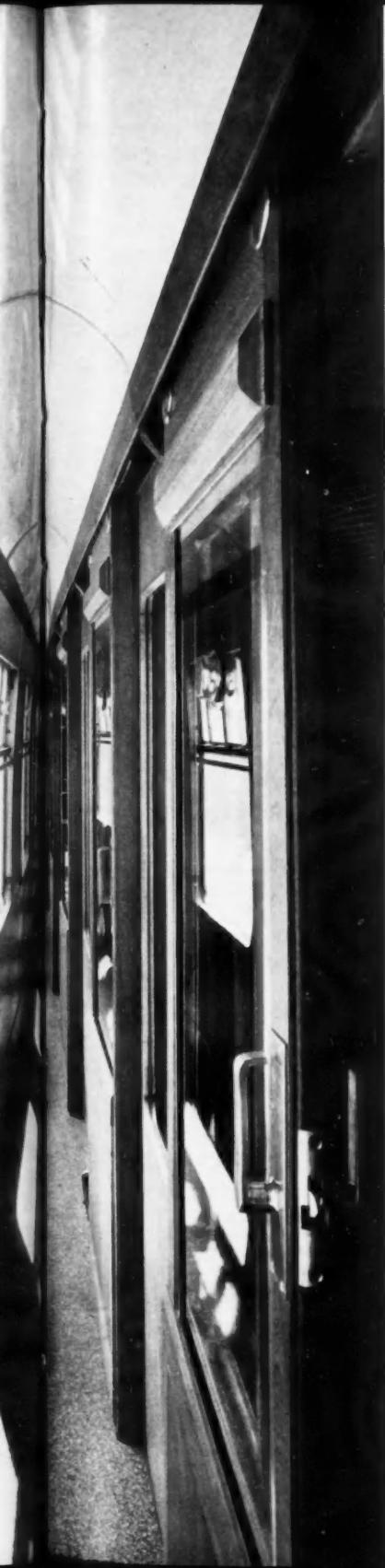
is made of a non-inflammable plastic material. The final version of the rug, 3, incorporates the letters B R, back-to-back in an ivory monogram.

1

2

3





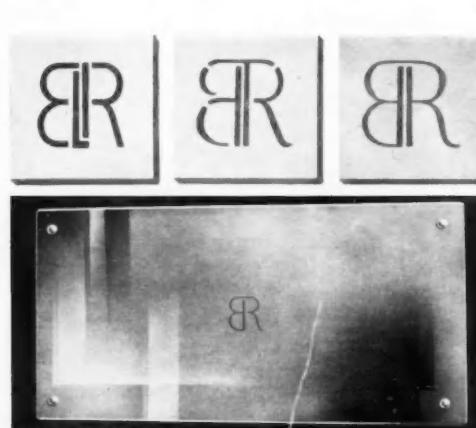
Several drawings were made in which this symbol occupied the whole of the rug (6 feet by 3 feet). Checked or striped grounds and different colours were used to relieve the form of the letters. An alternative design made use of the same symbol on a much smaller scale so that it repeated in six rows down the length of the rug to give an over-all pattern.

Full-sized drawings of these designs were then prepared on point-paper by different carpet manufacturers, and the smaller pattern was chosen. At this stage the lettering was modified so that the tail of the R was kept within the upper curve and as upright as possible. In this way the shapes formed across the rug by the backs of the monograms do not detract from the predominantly side-to-side and end-to-end run of the design, and there is a neater finish at the ends of the rug. The ground was striped across in two ends of light grey to one of dark to give an impression of increased width, and the monogram superimposed in ivory. When the first sample was woven it was thought to be too light: the proportions of the ground were reversed, the same ground being tried with a black and a brown figure. The ivory monogram was eventually accepted as the standard, 3.

A new marking for the compartment mirrors was later developed from this design and took the form of the original single monogram. Again the mirror has to be clearly marked in the centre to discourage theft. Before this new design the mirrors were stencilled with the sandblasted letters B R, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch high in sans serif type, sometimes accompanied by the regional letter as well. As it had a Roman form the monogram could not be reduced too far without losing the thinner strokes altogether, but the main difficulty, which took several months to overcome, was to reproduce the design by means which were easy and economical for mass-production. The monogram appeared to its best advantage when the flow of the letters was uninterrupted, although many attempts were made to incorporate bridges for the stencil at different points. Perfect reproductions were made by acid etching and sandblasting, using a different technique, but these

The view down the corridor, 4, shows the door handle and the specially designed linoleum in the new standard coach. Four stages in the development of the mirror

monogram are shown in 5. The example top, right, has been etched, but is much more expensive to produce than the final version below. 6: A general view of the interior.



4

5 6





The dining car, 7, is similar to the design prepared for the LMS just before nationalisation. Minor alterations included the addition of coat hooks.

methods were too expensive. Eventually the problem was solved by using a raised bridge to the stencil, 5.

With these minor modifications the design work done on the first standard coaching programme was complete except for the general layout and furniture of the new dining car design, 7, which were the same as those prepared for the LMS dining car just before nationalisation. It has been necessary to make minor alterations to the ceiling profile, the treatment of the end walls and the design of the chairs. The original mock-ups were inspected in September 1950, and after a public showing in March 1951 several sets were put into service in May. Corridor coaches of this type are gradually replacing older stock and are at the moment running on several of the named trains.

Buffet car

Apart from the work already described the only other coach at present in service with which the architect's office was concerned is a prototype buffet car, 8,

running on the Western Region. This was originally a kitchen coach with a dining compartment at each end. One of the compartments was left intact, while the other was converted to an open compartment with a service counter, two bench-type seats, small tables and wall shelves.

As the space was very restricted, this arrangement was dictated by the existing shape and structure of the coach. As far as possible the design was planned to suit the restaurant car operating department. In order to house a quantity of equipment the counter had to run down the length of the car; this was treated as the focal point, the colours being simple and dark in general effect to contrast with the goods displayed. The floor is of mottled white plastic tile, coved round the counter, with a pattern of olive green rectangles; the moquette, a manufacturer's stock pattern, is of the cut and uncut variety in two heights of pile, dyed to match the green of the floor. The counter top, table tops and shelves are in a light grey patterned plastic, the tables and shelves edged with hardwood nosings raised to prevent breakages and spilling liquid, but sloped on the inner face to allow it to be swept easily. Metal fittings are of satin-finished aluminium, and to set off the lighter colours the walls were veneered in a dark laurel wood with a semi-matt finish; radiator grilles on this veneer are in a bronzed finish.

Lineside furniture

Standardisation of existing articles and designs for new items were begun in 1950. Up to the present time those completed comprise mile-posts, 9, gradient posts, property boundary posts, regional and district boundary posts, 10, and gangers boundary posts. All are of pre-cast concrete, some of them reinforced, made in one or two sections with rounded or chamfered corners for ease of moulding. In the regional boundary post letters and figures are in black on tiles or vitreous enamelled plates of the regional colour; for other posts they are cast in the concrete and painted black, with the exception of the property boundary post, 11, where the marker plate is of bronze.

Staff Association badges

At the beginning of 1952 the British Railways Staff Association was inaugurated, to which any existing regional club or association could be admitted as a branch. In 1951 the architect was asked to prepare

designs for a badge which could be used for a blazer crest, a letter head, a lapel badge and a medal. At the same time a number of existing club badges and medals were gathered together for inspection. From the start it was decided to avoid a heraldic design, together with shields, wreaths and other fictitious symbols or allusions, and instead to provide a simple design such as the London Transport sign which, with appropriate additions or omissions, might be adapted to almost any type of circumstance and at the same time be easy and economical to translate into different materials.

To begin with, various patterns were submitted to the Joint Advisory Council for Welfare, who requested that the lion symbol should be included in the design. Eventually the design approved was a hexagonal figure, its corners rounded off, inside which was a ring containing the words "British Railways Staff Association." An inner circle contained a small simplified version of the lion symbol in white on the appropriate regional colour.

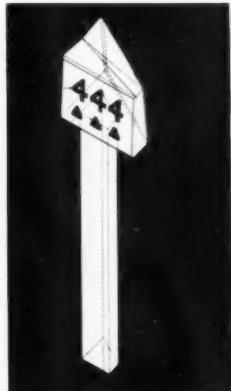
These notes represent only a small proportion of the non-architectural work planned and executed in the architect's office; a subsequent article will illustrate the development of new moquette patterns since the first designs of 1949. For various reasons already explained this is the only field in which continuous development has been possible. It is not claimed that any ideal solutions have been reached up to now because there has not been the opportunity to redesign items in the light of practical experience. But research and design work continue and, given the materials and the opportunities, it is hoped to extend the range of design for the railways in many new directions.



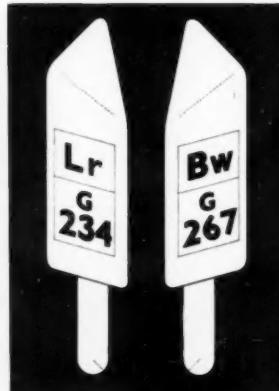
In the Buffet car, 8, the counter and table tops are edged with hardwood: the floor has a mottled white plastic tile, coved round the counter.

9

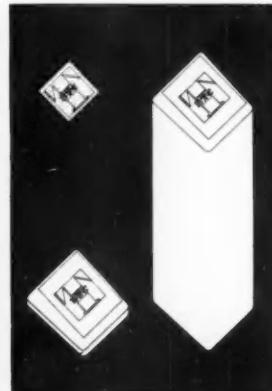
The mile post, 9, and the boundary posts, 10, are of pre-cast concrete with rounded or chamfered corners for ease of moulding. The markings are in black paint. The property boundary post, 11, has an inset marking letter in bronze.



10



11





Simple yet interesting furniture which children can imagine in their own homes was chosen for this living room in 'Bouncer Breaks Up'. A house-proud mother wants the room kept tidy, but Bouncer, an animal in cartoon form which comes alive from a scrap-book the children are reading, upsets furniture and breaks vases. True to story-book form the room is magically



Contemporary British film sets

THE FILM INDUSTRY HAS, UNTIL RECENTLY, been singularly 'behind the times' in its attitude to contemporary interior design and furnishings. To the cinema-goer whose outlook on life is coloured by what he sees on the screen and not by what may be seen in the shops, interiors are either antique, Hollywood 'luxury', or mediocre like, perhaps, his own life or the furniture in his own home to which he has become accustomed. As far as he is aware inexpensive and practical furniture and furnishings of contemporary design do not exist.

We recently welcomed the initiative of the film company Group 3 Ltd, in furnishing a newspaper editor's office with modern furniture which can be bought in the shops today (DESIGN, August 1952, page 3). Since then we have heard, almost simultaneously, of three more British films for which contemporary furniture is used.

In 'Folly to be Wise', a full-length feature film made by British Lion Studio Company Ltd, the art director,

Arthur Lawson, and set dresser, Bernard Sarron, have shown how this furniture can be fitted harmoniously into an old cottage with oak beams and ingle-nooks. Moreover, antique and modern furniture have been mingled in the same room.

Of quite a different type is 'Bouncer Breaks Up', a semi-cartoon film by Sadfas Ltd sponsored by the Children's Film Foundation for showing at Saturday morning cinema clubs. The story takes place in the living room of an ordinary house and the problem for the producer, Norman McQueen, and the art director, Don Charsey, was to present a room, neither drab nor lavish, yet with simple familiar furniture which would stand up to children's tumbles.

Finally, news came from Group 3 Ltd of another film in which the art director, Michael Stringer, had used contemporary furniture. This time the setting was a living room in a 'prefab' in which an atomic scientist and his family lived. The film, a comedy, is called 'Child's Play'. S.R.



Contemporary furniture fits harmoniously into this artist's cottage with oak beams and ingle-nooks in 'Folly to be Wise'. The gingham pattern wallpaper offsets the period mantelpiece and Danish wall-lamps blend with the oak beams of the sitting room. The standard lamp and bureau were regarded as too extreme by the director Frank Launder and will not be seen in the film.



Antique furniture and furnishings were mingled with contemporary pieces in the cottage in 'Folly to be Wise'. A Regency bureau looks well against the latest Robin Day sideboard containing Staffordshire pottery and Venetian glass. Victorian patchwork cushions contrast with modern curtains from Primavera and David Whitehead Ltd. Contemporary furnishings for this film lent by Dunn's of Bromley.



To furnish the 'prefab' living room in 'Child's Play', Group 3 Ltd again co-operated with the CoID. Furniture was borrowed from Hille and Co, George Hammer Ltd, and Horace Holme Ltd; light fittings from the GEC, vases and plates from Primavera, curtain fabrics from Whiteheads, and potted plant from Story's. The room looks overfull, but this is perhaps characteristic of an atomic scientist—the film character who lives in it with his family.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

New uses for glass fibre

THE USE OF GLASS FIBRE LAMINATES in aircraft became fairly widespread during the war. Since that time further applications have been developed and we now find them used in objects such as fishing rods, body armour, washing machines, suitcases, chairs, boats and even cars.

At the Glass Fibre Reinforced Plastics Convention held at Leamington Spa earlier this year, it was shown that experiments in this country are not so far advanced as in the United States. Speakers at the Convention chiefly confined their papers to the material as used for armaments and its technical properties. However, there are many manufacturers of domestic products who could exploit the peculiar properties of glass fibre laminates. The illustrations on this page show how wide is the variety of applications in the United States.

High strength-to-weight ratio plus ease of fabrication into relatively large structures prove the versatility of glass fibre laminates. They can be used for large high-strength/lightweight structures, lightly stressed structures and for components where the requirements involve high-rigidity. In cars, for instance, high 'dent' resistance can be combined with minimum weight. Other advantages are high tensile strength, high moisture resistance, chemical inertness, low coefficient of expansion and, as a cloth, tear-resistance.

Many development problems have still to be worked out. Higher strength-to-weight ratios are required and the effect of moisture seriously reduces bend-strength and electrical efficiency of the laminates.

Other possible advantages may follow from the development of efficient moisture resistant finishes for glass fibres. Costs are relatively high at present and any means by which they could be reduced would contribute to the more widespread use of the material.



1: Glass fibre office chair designed by Charles Eames for the Herman Miller Furniture Co. 2: Lightweight glass fibre laminate forms the case for this model by Lewyt Vacuum Co Ltd. 3: Glass fibre $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick forms this one-piece car body for the Ferro Corporation of Cleveland. 4: High-strength glass fibre has been moulded for this suitcase by H. Koch and Sons. All firms: USA.





DESIGN POLICY IN INDUSTRY

The Radiation Group of Companies

Paul Reilly

The evolution of a satisfactory design policy can often be speedily achieved in any industry by small firms. But in large concerns, like the group of companies described in this article, complete control over the design of each product demands special qualities. There must be a single-minded approach towards all design and development problems from the chairman downwards, as well as time and money to spend on experiments. Above all, a team of enlightened designers is needed to carry out work related to contemporary achievements in other fields.

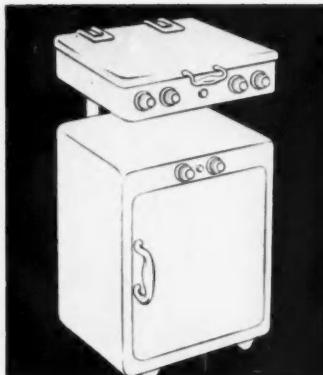
THE STORY OF DOMESTIC GAS COOKER design over the last hundred years is typical of many engineering products. It could be told in terms of production, of the emergence of the specialist factory worker and the decline of the individual craftsman. It could be told in terms of scientific invention and technological development, of the introduction of new materials, new finishes and new methods of operation. It could also perhaps be told in terms of consumer demand and domestic practice. But it could *not* be told in terms of conscious industrial design. The professional industrial designer, as distinct from the architectural consultant, is in this as in many other industries only a relatively new member of the production team.

To say this is not to suggest that Victorian cookers were not designed. A glance at the old catalogues with their careful steel engravings of elaborate castings tells a tale of affectionate attention to detail on the part of the nineteenth century pattern-makers. Indeed many of these old castings seem today to have more character and charm than do some of the slick airbrush jobs displayed in modern publicity. There was a good reason, too, for the decoration on those old cookers; the ornament was not all meaningless, for the surface patterns often concealed minor flaws and distracted attention from inequalities in the castings.

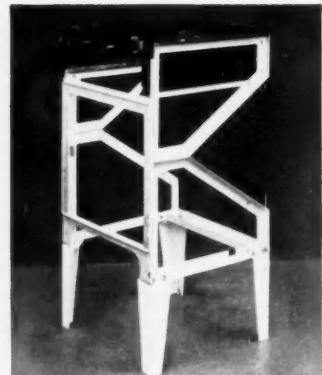
It is a common failing to judge Victorian productions by twentieth century standards. It is possibly equally



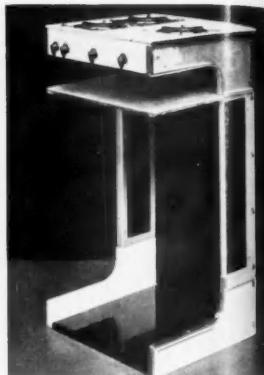
1895 cooker by Arden Hill & Co Ltd, with large hot plate "specially designed for the Colonial market."



War-time sketch design by Oscar Singer for a cooker embodying the principle of separate hotplate cantilevered over oven.



An experimental chassis construction built at Radiation's Luton works, incorporating modified cantilever.



Chassis of another experimental cooker made at Luton with cantilevered oven, The same...

misleading to argue that because modern taste likes a clean, smooth surface, the gas appliance industry decided to redesign its cookers. It is just as probable that tastes followed technical invention and accepted unbroken surfaces because the new vitreous enamel finishes introduced in the 'twenties demanded them. And yet even in gas appliances there must be some element of fashion, or rather some relation between the design of the appliance and the sort of setting in which it will be seen. The old pattern-makers produced their text-book designs to conform with pre-conceived ideas of style or of architectural background; the multiplication of patterns in the old catalogues was well in line with the eclectic thinking of the builders and architects of those days and the market was well served by the industry. Today, too, any progressive manufacturer of appliances must keep an eye on architectural trends and contemporary ideas on interior design; it was perhaps only during the period of intensive technical development during the 'twenties and 'thirties of this century that the industry was least in touch with architectural taste, but then also the study of interior design in relation to domestic economy was in its infancy.

Forming the Group

The present-day interest in appearance design and the growing influence of the industrial designer or 'artist technician' coincide with far-reaching re-organisations of production and management, at least

in the group of companies with which this article is concerned.

Radiation Ltd was formed in 1919 by grouping several individual companies, some of which had been in the gas appliances business since the middle years of the nineteenth century. Names like Wilsons & Mathiesons Ltd, Leeds (1854), John Wright & Co Ltd, Birmingham (1866) and The Davis Gas Stove Co Ltd, Luton (1868) are among the oldest in the industry, while the younger members of the Group, Fletcher Russell & Co Ltd, Warrington (1872), Arden Hill & Co Ltd, Birmingham (1880) and Richmond's Gas Stove Co Ltd, Warrington (1890) were all thriving concerns before the turn of the century.

To a great extent, therefore, the design policy of Radiation Ltd between the wars was conditioned by the individual loyalties and local patriotisms of these component companies. At its formation the Group inherited the embryonic design policies characteristic of the preceding period; the dominant partners in such policies were the manager of the pattern department, who knew what could be made and how, and the manager of the sales department, who knew what would be acceptable to the public at a given price. It was an empirical rather than a scientific approach to the problems of gas appliance production and marketing.

Even before the formation in 1919 of Radiation Ltd, which was inspired by its first chairman, H. James Yates, great advances had been made by the individual companies in the field of planned production and scientific development, with the strictly imposed



The same cooker after assembly of oven, panels, etc, showing the development as far as it was carried.



First demonstration model of the NEW WORLD EIGHTY FOUR finished in black and white.

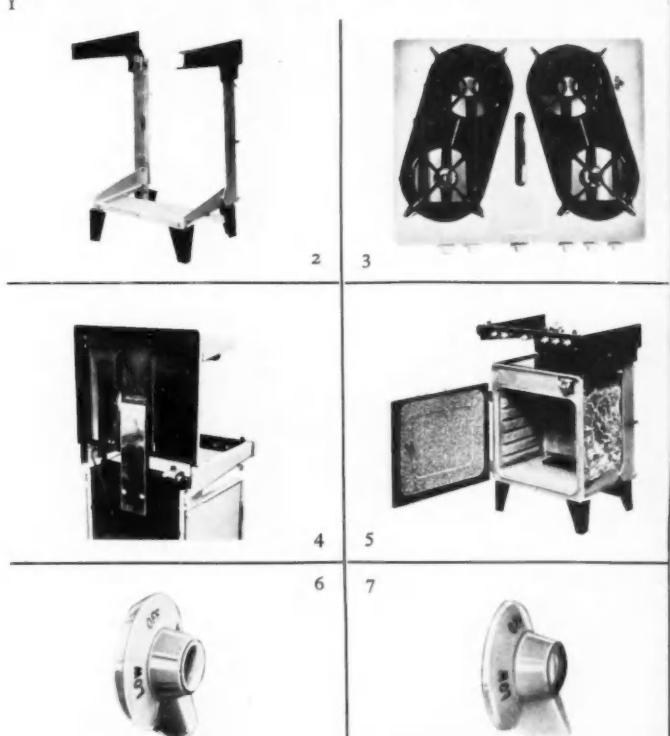


1: THE EIGHTY FOUR as now on the market in green and cream, or two tones of cream. Note the wide hotplate with clear space below for cleaning the oven top and the lower position of the vent conducting heat from oven to plate rack. 2: The chassis stripped to its bare essentials. 3: This hotplate arrangement allows for tap handles directly in front of the respective burners. 4: The

flush back of the EIGHTY FOUR allows close fit to kitchen wall. 5: The cooker semi-dismantled. Complete dismantling can be done in about five minutes. 6 and 7: Radiation's attention to design is shown in the revision of the tap handles. Left, the first design with dust-collecting chamfer; right, after redesign with a face that is cleaned easily.

standards of efficiency, hygiene and safety that are today the basis of the Group's reputation. These steps involved, from 1909 onwards, the addition to the production team of specialist scientists, not only to further invention but to maintain standards. From the early years of Radiation Ltd stems the predominance of the Group's Central Laboratories. The Group was among the first in the gas industry to employ men with university training in science. One of them, Dr Harold Hartley, is now its chairman.

The centralisation of development and research services for the benefit of all the member firms was accompanied by the further employment of technicians and by changes in materials, finishes and methods of manufacture. The role of the older craftsmen inevitably diminished as the influence of the new technicians increased. To the foundrymen and





Radiation's interest in keeping its products abreast of contemporary ideas in interior design is well shown in the arrangement of this publicity photograph for the MALMES-

BURY gas fire; wallpaper, light, chair, fire surround, and fire are all well matched. In its printed publicity, too, the company has struck a fresh note with clear

typography (as in the top brochure), but this standard is not consistently maintained as a point of design policy (see the two lower leaflets).



pattern-makers were added the sheet metal specialists, the vitreous enamellers and the production engineers. With these developments went standardisation and simplification of working parts and the advantages of rationalisation of production within the Group. The individual companies, however, continued to trade for some years under their own names.

Types of designer used

It was already clear before the first war that to complete the production team, specialist advice on the outward form of appliances would be needed; the organisation was becoming too complex to retain the old methods of arriving at a design. Such advice was first sought for the design of gas fires in which form and finish would have a direct effect on sales; this advice was obtained in the first place by engaging architects as consultants and by recruiting onto the staff engineering draughtsmen with some architectural or design training. As soon as the reputation of the professional industrial designer spread from the United States to this country, the Group invited the foremost American designer, Raymond Loewy, and his associate, Carl Otto, to advise on gas fires and radiators.

By the middle 'thirties two of their models were in successful production. To meet post-war competition the Group engaged the services of a well-known London firm of industrial designers, the Richard Lonsdale-Hands Organisation, to advise on the styling of certain products. Even in the present-day organisation of its design policy Radiation Ltd still envisages the *ad hoc* employment of outside consultants as occasion arises.

In recent months, however, the Group's thinking on design policy has crystallised and a definite though flexible pattern is emerging. Speaking at the 1951 International Design Congress, Dr Harold Hartley gave the keynote of Radiation's approach to design: "The design policy of an organisation is, or ought to be, the responsibility of high level management. Even when it includes the help of specialists called into consultation from outside, it is better that the policy itself should be evolved and implemented from within."

Internal Design Organisation

It is not surprising, therefore, that the pattern that has emerged is pyramidal, with the Chairman and his Board of Directors at the apex. Reporting to the board

is the main Development Committee directing all the Group's research, development and design activities. The members of this committee are the responsible director, research manager and such other co-opted members of the staff as may be required. The Chairman of the Development Committee is the Managing Director of Radiation Group Sales Ltd, for in the last resort it is the sales direction which carries responsibility for success or failure.

Reporting to this development committee are four panels concerned with the main activities of the Group: domestic cookers and fires; solid fuel appliances; water heaters; and large cookers. The Chairman of a panel is usually a director of the main Group supported by scientists, technicians and representatives of the sales and production departments. The panels direct their own activities and may initiate projects on their own, though final approval must be given by the development committee. The individual projects within the scope of each panel are handled by small development teams, constituted as need arises and appointed by the panel chairman.

For all this tidy hierarchy, which is almost certainly clearer on paper than when translated into terms of human beings, there is no short answer to the question: "Where does a new design start?"

It would be nice perhaps to picture a central studio humming with genius from which stems a steady stream of inventions and new forms. Indeed since the recent setting-up of the Radiation Design Unit (RDU), close by the central laboratories in Birmingham, the outside observer is tempted to anticipate some such development; but it would be premature. The RDU, headed by an architect, J. C. E. Fortey, is wisely modest in its interventions. The designers are no more than equal members of the production team, called in as early as possible on any project. The RDU is thus represented in discussions at all levels; its members are co-opted on to the individual development teams; it is represented on the panels and may be called in to advise the development committee. It performs the function of an independent consultant within the framework of the Group; it is, moreover, always at liberty to recruit specialist design advice from outside the organisation. But its establishment still does not answer the question: "Who initiates a new design?"

There is, of course, no one answer. The demand for a new appliance may come as well from the sales side as from the production department; it may arise from research work in the central laboratories, or it may, as in the case of the latest cooker, stem from a cross between the Chairman's urge for fresh development, an engineer's ingenuity, and the sales director's sense of the

market. But whatever the source of the idea the project will not be realised except through the stages of examination and approval guaranteed by the Radiation structure of teams, panels and development committee.

New methods: new models

In the gas cooker field two examples may be taken as typical of the way development problems may be solved in the Group. In the first a combination of market pressure and manufacturing economy led to the mass-production of a standard cooker at Warrington. Three years ago the sales department of Radiation reported that the market urgently needed a simple, efficient but low-priced cooker in great quantities. The problem could be solved in the Group only by still further extending plant specialisation and standardisation. It was decided that the Warrington factories should tackle the job. As an experiment in simplification it produced startling results. In just over one year the factory raised its production of gas cookers by 140 per cent with an increase in employees of only 15 per cent. Such mass-production meant reducing the plant's range from 34 different types, sizes and finishes, to one type with a single finish and two hotplate arrangements as the only variants.

The resulting model, the NEW WORLD S4180, is an

The popular, low-priced, mass-produced NEW WORLD S4180 cooker produced at Radiation's Warrington factories. This four-burner model is finished in white and grey vitreous enamel. All corners are rounded for easy cleaning.



unpretentious, efficient engineering job. Some refinements of detail, though not of basic construction, may be expected from closer collaboration between the Radiation Design Unit and the Warrington works when the Mark 2 model is put into production.

The second development is more interesting because the thought behind it was more experimental. The resulting model, the EIGHTY FOUR, has just been launched on the market and is illustrated on these pages. The story goes back to the war years and the employment by Radiation of a refugee designer, Oscar Singer, who explored a new principle of chassis construction, now generally referred to in the Group as the 'cantilever construction'. The main innovation in this design was the separation of the oven from the hotplate, which was cantilevered out above the oven.

Shortly afterwards and quite independently the engineer designers at the Luton works began experimenting with new chassis constructions and, in response to a request from the chairman for a new form of vertical cooker, devised a chassis with a cantilever. The chairman had asked for a design that would depart from the rut into which cooker design in general seemed to have fallen; too many were just square boxes. The new principle also made possible the production of a cooker in which the hotplate and the oven are separate units, each designed to perform its own

function to the fullest extent but, at the same time, to combine coherently and attractively as seen in the final version, the NEW WORLD EIGHTY FOUR. The main lines of this cooker had been decided before the RDU was set up, but throughout the whole development period the Group's consultant designers were constantly called upon to advise on the cooker's final form.

To attempt a summing-up of the Radiation Group design policy as illustrated by the formal organisation of committees and the two examples quoted is not easy. The industrial designer is still young in the industry; the engineers have their special expertise; the scientists, chemists and even the expert cooks in the central laboratories are constantly enquiring into new techniques; while the salesmen are ever restless for further improvement within the limits of their assessment of public preferences. It is not a docile team that the development committee has to manage, but industrial design is high on the agenda and there is every reason to believe that the Radiation Design Unit will grow in stature and extend its influence. It may even succeed in giving a uniform and distinguished character to the Group's heterogeneous series of publicity leaflets and brochures, which at present suggests that nothing is further from the directors' minds than a consistent design policy.

The NEW WORLD CIRCULYN water-heaters are made in three sizes to meet domestic and industrial needs. Their smooth compact shells are finished in white vitreous enamel. The modest trade-marks are clear but unobtrusive.

The lozenge shape of the 3150 boiling burner may be a bit too fashionable to avoid becoming dated, but it is a clean, efficient design which contrasts well with its predecessors.

The element of fashionable styling is also evident in the NEW WORLD 3518 gas range; the handles are streamlined and the splash-back with its polished aluminium vents is akin to a dash-board, but these are minor criticisms of a product which offers many invaluable culinary features in a compact layout.



George Williams *

Long distance touring coach by Windovers Ltd combining good external shape with restrained surface decoration.



MOTOR COACHES: 1952

IN HIS RECENT BOOK, 'Never Leave Well Enough Alone', Raymond Loewy maintains that when the design of a project has reached a satisfactory stage British designers seem unable to resist the urge to add one more strip, ornament, moulding, twist, or curlicue. Although these remarks coming from an American may seem strange, they were amply supported by many exhibits at last month's Commercial Motor Show. Indeed, in attempting to surpass the fifteen-year-old American vogue for 'borax' it seems that we are sadly out of date.

The Show was described as "the most comprehensive and spectacular display of motor vehicles and allied products in any country." It was undoubtedly a fine exhibition of British brains and workmanship, and again proved that the larger British commercial vehicle chassis, particularly when designed for passenger carrying, are some of the finest engineering achievements of our age. The body engineer has made remarkable progress in all-metal construction in steel or light alloy, and has achieved a pleasant simplicity of line, only to be hidden with gilt and glitter by the exponents of 'style' and 'public taste'. One serious-minded and leading manufacturer described the coachwork section as "the greatest show of applied mouldings on earth."

A 30-seat vehicle by Duple Motor Bodies, on a Daimler Freeline chassis, has been designed "in con-

sultation with industrial designers." The hand of the industrial designer is certainly evident, but it has been nearly swamped by the addition of some curlicues mentioned by Loewy which do *not* belong to the fine overall conception.

Making its first appearance at any commercial vehicle show is the half-deck coach built by Mann Egerton. It is mounted on a Foden chassis and incorporates an entirely new form of 'condensed' seating, giving a high degree of comfort for its 50 passengers, considering the low overall height. On the lower deck, facing seats have a table between them: a welcome amenity for small parties travelling together. An alternative version of this design, but with seats all facing forward, is the subject of a new patent application No 22462/52.

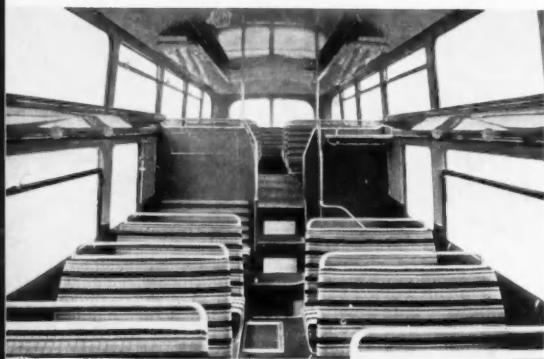
Two of the finest passenger vehicles in the Show are those designed for transporting airline passengers between town terminals and airports. The coaches reach the same high degree of comfort enjoyed in modern aircraft. They also provide a large space for luggage and for its quick on-loading and off-loading. The vehicles are the new Park Royal deck-and-a-half coach for British European Airways and the latest Harrington all-metal coach for British Overseas Airways. The latter shows the result of a gradual development and improvement from a long line of coaches which this firm has built for the Corporation.

Indeed, one is prompted to ask why manufacturers should assume that the taste of coach travellers who

* Industrial Officer CoID



ABOVE: A view of the jazz treatment of the interior roof of the Duple CORONATION AMBASSADOR. (Duple Motor Bodies Ltd.)



ABOVE: The BEA coach incorporates London Transport-type tubular seats fitted with deep DUNLOPILLO cushions and squabs. The colour scheme is in the standard colours of the Corporation. Consultant designer, James Gardner.

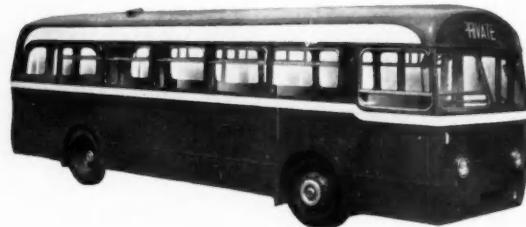


ABOVE: For export to Japan? Touring coach by James Whitton and Co Ltd.

BELLOW: The hammock type seats of the Fiat O.M. Autobus. Padded with Latex foam upholstery, the horizontal pleating conforms naturally to the shape of the body. Head-rest covers in woven plastic may be removed for cleaning.



This new half-deck coach incorporates the Crellin system of seating. It is admirably finished in a two-colour scheme and is a model of good planning, with no waste of space or unnecessary ornamentation. (Mann Egerton and Co Ltd.)



The Leyland TIGER CUB 44-seater bus with a front-entrance prototype body by Metropolitan-Cammell-Weyman Motor Bodies Ltd. Unladen weight is under six tons. This exhibit is notable for its well-balanced and unspoiled lines. (Leyland Motors Ltd.)



Unloaded, the BOAC airline coach weighs less than five tons. It has clean lines and provides exceptional comfort for 35 passengers. The unusual treatment of the windscreen does not help the frontal appearance but gives excellent driving visibility. (Thomas Harrington Ltd.)

go all the way by road to their destination is different from the taste of those who travel to the airport to catch a plane. The design of airline coaches is incomparably better than that of general touring coaches. Also, there is a marked difference in design treatment between the luxury coach and some of the new all-metal service buses for home and overseas use. The latter are clean, if rather severe in appearance. Apart from



Good lines, good colour, good visibility, large luggage capacity with quick on-loading and off-loading are features of this 'deck-and-a-half' airline coach for BEA. The same high degree of comfort enjoyed in modern aircraft is reached. (Park Royal Vehicles Ltd.)



The otherwise excellent lines and treatment of detail of the Duple CORONATION AMBASSADOR for Northern Roadways have been spoiled by the application of ornaments to the coachwork which is so obviously an afterthought. Woven plastic tartan panels are inset between exterior mouldings.



The exaggerated falling lines of the Whitson 'observation coach' do not contribute to good general appearance. Less adventurous treatment of surface mouldings and lamps would have added dignity and continuity to the general lines of this otherwise well-planned vehicle.

these it is clear that designers have not yet reached the right conclusions as far as external appearance is concerned. Perhaps the right answer lies in the Windover coach which is similar to the one exhibited in the Transport Pavilion of the Festival of Britain last year. This coach combines good external shape with a limited form of surface decoration that enhances the overall appearance.



ABOVE: The treatment of the front of the Fiat O.M. 23-seater Autobus is well planned and gives excellent visibility.



ABOVE: The Duple CORONATION AMBASSADOR coach from the front.

BETWEEN: The inappropriate leaded and stained glass rear light of the Duple coach has been described in the Press as "giving almost the dignity of a chapel."





SWEDEN

IT IS ESSENTIAL to provide the opportunity to experiment and develop new solutions to the problems of furniture design. Although furniture designs of a high standard are more important than those which are merely new, the more revolutionary researches of today may well provide the cheaper furniture of tomorrow. In London the recent exhibition, 'Tomorrow's Furniture', showed what British furniture designers envisaged for the future regardless of public demand. (DESIGN, August 1952, page 34.)

Meanwhile, Swedish designers were talking about an exhibition held in Gothenburg, which showed what that country's new generation of furniture designers had to offer in addition to items which had been available in the shops for some time. Most of the newer pieces had already found producers, but to us the exhibition is chiefly significant as an indication of the trend of Swedish furniture production. Wood, particularly steam-pressed and moulded, seems to be as popular as ever although metal, and occasionally cane, were to be seen.

The furniture illustrated here was shown at the exhibition. The lamps, though not exhibited, come from Sweden also and show an interesting use of metal with other materials.

This chair is called 'The Hole' presumably because it may be used for reclining, to curl up in or for sitting upright. The upholstered 'seat' rests on a metal frame. Designed by Tord Kempe and not yet in production. BELOW: Cocoon-like white plastic lampshade on a metal tripod stand. Designed by Hans Bergström and produced by Atelje Lyktan.





LEFT: A new version of a prize-winning set of shelves called 'Stringhyllan'. This model has movable teak shelves and plastic coated iron rod gables. Designed by Karin and Nisse Strinning and produced by String Design AB.

RIGHT ABOVE: Metal stand and base and lamp-shade in a printed fabric. Designed by Hans Bergström and produced by Atelje Lyktan.

RIGHT: This wooden framed chair has an upholstered spring seat and back in the form of two cushions. Designed by Alf Svensson and produced by Madrassfabriken DUX.

LEFT: A basketwork chair with a loose upholstered seat which is sold with a wooden or metal frame. Designed by Gunnar Myrstrand and Sven Engström and produced by AB Westbergs Möbler.

RIGHT: A new version of the familiar laminated wood chair. Designed by Carl-Axel Acking and produced by Svenska Möbelfabrikerna.

BELOW: One of this pair of matching lacquered wooden beds pushes under the other. The legs fold underneath the base and wooden runners in the form of cylindrical knobs prevent the floor from being scratched. The frame is beech wood. Produced by Boklund and Davidson.





Sir Gerald Barry suggests permanent design exhibition

A call for the establishment of a permanent exhibition of the best in British industrial design as a service to overseas buyers was made by Sir Gerald Barry recently. He was giving, in Glasgow, the first of a series of lectures organised by the Scottish Committee of the CoID.

Sir Gerald envisaged a centre similar to the 'Design Review' section of the South Bank exhibition, but more complete in scope with exhibits constantly changing. The centre could, in time, be extended to include the goods of other countries. It would also be open to British manufacturers, buyers and retailers and the public.

This centre, and the city that housed it, would in time become recognised as the world-centre of industrial design, and the fact that it was located in Britain and started and maintained by British enterprise would bring prestige and trade to this country. Sir Gerald asked whether British industrialists and manufacturers would be interested to develop this possibility.

Further talks in this series of lectures organised by the Scottish Committee of the CoID will be given by John Barnes, speaking on "The Problems of the Designer" on November 7 and George Breeze on "The Retailer's Responsibility in Design" on December 12.

Furnishing a home on TV

A report of how a young couple have furnished their new home will be given in three television programmes, provisionally called 'A Home for the Smiths', to take place on November 7 and 21 and December 12 from 8.15 to 8.45 pm. The couple have a limited amount of money, but with the help of a professional designer, Hulme Chadwick, they have tried to make certain of spending it wisely.

New CoID members for Scotland

Three new members of the Scottish Committee of the CoID have been appointed. They are I. H. Stuart Black, managing director of Donaldson, Brothers and Black Ltd; director of the Clyde Stevedoring Co Ltd; Donaldson Atlantic Line Ltd and the Donaldson Line Ltd; W. G. N. Walker, chairman and managing director of Jute Industries Ltd; and the Baron Marchand, partner of George Harrison and Co (woollen merchants) and Belgian Vice-Consul in Edinburgh.

International poster competition

An international poster design competition has been organised by the British and London Poster Advertising Associations. Designs must be centred around the theme that in posters advertisers can take advantage of the full use of colour.

These potters and many others were also well represented at the exhibition 'Modern British Pottery and Textiles', organised by the Arts Council at the New Burlington Galleries. Here, the exhibits were more formally displayed, for the exhibition was originally arranged in connection with the International Conference of Craftsmen in Pottery and Textiles held at Dartington Hall in July. The exhibition is now at the City Art Gallery, Birmingham, until November 8.

Stick-on display letters

A range of individual adhesive letters suitable for use in advertising, publicity, marketing and retailing has been designed by Donald Bell-Scott of Cockade Ltd. A choice of six designs is available based on



Gill Sans, Albertus, Egyptian and Grotesque type-faces; these include capitals and lower case letters and numerals.

The letters are screen printed with a durable, matt finish in black, white, red, blue, green or grey, and certain alphabets in a marbled paper. DAYGLO colours are also supplied. The letters are cut from master patterns, the back is coated with adhesive, and this is protected by a transparent paper backing which is easily removed, without handling the corners, when the letters are ready for fixing. With care the letters may be removed and re-affixed in case of an error or change in layout.

Sizes range from 1½ to 9 inches in depth, and prices vary from 2s 3d to 11s 6d a dozen. The letters are easy and economical to use and they have the advantage of being consistent in shape and size.

Details of the competition, which closes at the end of January 1953, may be obtained from the British and London Poster Advertising Associations, 48 Russell Square, London WC1.

Latex foam in furniture

An exhibition of Latex foam furniture will be held at the Building Centre (London) from December 3-13. It will show pictorially the stages in the manufacture of Latex foam. Some furniture in which it is used will also be on show. The exhibition, which is organised by the British Rubber Development Board, will be open on weekdays from 9.30 am to 5 pm and on Saturdays from 1.30 am to 1 pm.

Pottery on show

Two exhibitions of contemporary pottery recently open in London at the same time aroused considerable public interest.

'Ceramics in the Home' organised by THE OBSERVER in the hall of Charing Cross Underground Station was a splendid little exhibition which in a small space showed a wide range of contemporary ceramics as they might be used for decorating and furnishing the home. Vases, wall plates, cups and saucers and table ware, ash trays and table lamp bases were shown in room settings which provided, at the same time, those members of the public still unfamiliar with contemporary furniture a glimpse of how attractive an inexpensively furnished room can look.

Work of well-known potters such as Bernard Leach, Michael Cardew, Lucie Rie, William Nowland and James Tower was included as well as some pieces by well-known painters and sculptors.

CoID room settings in Scottish exhibition



The stand of the Scottish Committee of the CoID at the 'Modern Homes' exhibition in Kelvin Hall, Glasgow, last month. The stand showed seven different room settings displaying contemporary furniture from two Glasgow furnishing stores: Elders Ltd and Wylie and Lochhead Ltd. The stand was designed by Gillespie, Kidd and Coia and two interior designers, Mary Tindall and Margery Benson Harris, designed the rooms.

LETTERS

TV cabinets criticised

SIR: I read Mr Sharp's article 'Radio Cabinets 1952' (DESIGN October page 24) with some dissatisfaction and I have been encouraged to write to you and present a manufacturer's point of view because a television set of our manufacture was selected for adverse comment.

If the designer is merely an artist who conceives pretty boxes, he is useless to most manufacturers. To be useful a designer must design with full appreciation of the general problems, and if he does not at first appreciate these problems he should ask questions until he does.

A similar attitude on the part of a designer is necessary when he writes critical articles or reviews. I was most favourably impressed by an article on balances in the same issue. There the author, while considering external appearance, has never forgotten that balances are made in factories, are used to weigh things and must be paid for.

Mr Sharp reveals that attitude only sporadically. He criticises two television sets with sloping fronts and praises one with a straight vertical front. It might have occurred to him that the fronts of some sets are sloped so as to face the viewer squarely when he is sitting down. He praises a radiogram on whose open lid an album of records can be placed, quite forgetting the fact that if the lid is not shut while the gramophone is playing, the 'needle-talk' – the sound coming directly from the needle running in its groove – can be most irritating. The acoustics of cabinet design are mentioned indirectly once and the accessi-

bility of the chassis – an important element in the cost of servicing and maintenance – is mentioned twice.

What is left is a discourse on the aesthetics of modern furniture. This is interesting and important, but it loses much force because aesthetics are considered in isolation. A manufacturer who would sacrifice ease of operation, comfort of television viewing or quality of sound to visual appearance must be damned with the same anathema as one who covers his set with artificial wood carving.

How does one make a handsome direct-viewing television set? Mr Sharp praises a console model with doors. Doors represent a confession of the fact that a television set when not working is basically ugly and is best hidden. Unfortunately doors cost money. I estimate that by the time they are paid for and the wholesaler's profit, purchase-tax and retailer's profit have been added, a pair of full length doors would cost the customer £4. A set has a bulky cathode ray tube pointing towards the viewer and unless expensive methods are used little variation in shape is possible. The tube must be easily visible and, when the set is not working, the picture area will be a large vacant white space. One of the minor advantages of the tinted screen is that the picture-area is less obtrusive when the set is not in use. I have yet to see a satisfactory solution of this problem.

May I add that we will continue to manufacture what the public wants and we will determine this by listening to our dealers. We dare do nothing else. Any leadership in the field of design must come from others. I hope that public taste will progress apace, and we will march somewhere between the van and the rear of that progress. But now and in the future we must

try to meet the current public taste as regards acoustical quality and visual appearance.

B. J. BENZIMRA
Managing Director
Felgate Radio Ltd
(Manufacturers of McCarthy
Radio and Television)
Felgate House
Studland Street
Hammersmith w6

MR SHARP REPLIES:

Mr Benzimra is being more than unfair to those designers named and unnamed whose sets were illustrated in my article; all of them have had long experience of designing radio cabinets. No reputable manufacturer would allow a 'pretty box' to affect the performance, but this is surely no excuse to take the chassis and loudspeaker, put them in a box and then proceed to stick veneers and slats of wood on it until it resembles a piece of furniture. Cabinet and chassis should be designed together; in scientific instruments, such as a balance, this is inevitable and automatically leads to good design, or at any rate leaves less scope to 'applique'.

The listener who has had to sort out eight or ten records for an 'auto-player' will know the advantage of having some space to lay out his albums.

Space precludes a long discussion on the ideal design for a television console, but it is possible to have the cathode ray tube on the slope without protruding it and its surround beyond the cabinet. However, the value of the slope is dubious as in an average chair the eye of the viewer is 3ft. from the floor, giving an angle far less than the best seat in the cinema.

BOOKS

Decorative Art – The Studio Year Book
edited by Rathbone Holme and Kathleen M. Frost, *The Studio Ltd*, 30s

The latest edition of the Studio Year Book contains over 400 illustrations of contemporary furniture, furnishings, ceramics, china, glass, silver and light fittings from Europe and the Americas, accompanied by an introductory text and an index.

The largest section is devoted to furniture, in which pieces to suit every taste are loosely grouped by rooms. Not all the leading designers are represented but, excepting for Italy and Switzerland which deserve a better showing, national trends in design are clearly demonstrated. In style these comprise the American neat, rectangular, impersonally modish, magazine modern; the Scandinavian urbane, elegant, outstanding in design and craftsmanship; the British, still labouring under a Utility complex, greatly pre-occupied with heavily-marked veneers, exaggerated splays and aggressive cantilevers; the French individual, bizarre, at best witty, still apparently hovering in the 'thirties and hardly deserving of the implied claim that France leads the world in furnishing fashion.

Other sections show a more consistent level of design and style as between countries and are, a few items excepted, uniformly excellent. Ceramics and glass, in which the Scandinavian countries are again outstanding, show marked derivation from folk art in their leaning towards informality. The silverware is a mixed lot; one or two modernistic pieces are put to shame by the simple Danish ware. There are some good textiles in what is perhaps the best section in the book, but few carpets and rugs are shown, even allowing for a

lack of choice. More space might be found for these by omitting domestic lamps (as distinct from light fittings and desk lamps) and the miscellaneous decoration section at the end most of whose illustrations properly belong elsewhere.

The production is well up to the standard of the series in design and typography, with attractive illustrations which include some excellent colour reproductions. An annual review of this type makes an interesting reference book and would be welcome in other arts and industries.

IAN COLQUHOUN

Final Report of The Anglo-American Council on Productivity, September 1952.
3s 6d

In extending a welcome to this concisely written and well presented report we are glad to note that it is not as "final" as the title implies, for its work is to be carried on under the auspices of the British Productivity Council now in process of formation.

Several of the reports of teams visiting the USA have yet to be published, including that of the Design for Production team, on which the CoID was represented by its Chief Industrial Officer, Mark Hartland Thomas.

Suitability for production has always been recognised by the CoID as an essential factor in industrial design and we look forward to continued collaboration with the productivity council under its new name.

Designers in this issue

PAGE 6: Dr Christopher Dresser; W. A. S. Benson; E. W. Godwin; Prof W. R. Lethaby; Omar Ramsden. PAGE 7: R. C. Heritage; DES RCA; R. D. Russell, RDI, FSIA (also pages 10

and 11); R. Y. Goodden, RDI, ARIBA, FSIA. PAGE 8: David Booth, FRIBA, FSIA; Judith Ledebour, ARIBA. PAGE 9: Nevile Ward, B.Arch., ARIBA, MSIA; Frank Austin, MSIA; Enid Marx, RDI, FSIA; Basil Spence, OBE, FRIBA, FRIAS; Frank Gill, DES RCA; Philip Popham, ARCA. PAGE 10: Ian Henderson, FRSA, MSIA. PAGE 11: J. A. Todd, F. P. Woodring, R. A. W. MacKillop, all students at Beckenham School of Art; Alan Irvine, student at the Royal College of Art; Ernest Gimson. PAGE 12: W. Bruce Brown, MSIA; Susie Cooper, RDI; Rodney Hooper, MSIA (also page 13); Neil Morris, MSIA; William E. Gordon. PAGE 13: A. C. Hazel, Robin Day, ARCA, FSIA; Pat Albeck. PAGE 22: Charles Eames. PAGE 24: Oscar Singer, FRIBA. PAGE 26: Raymond Loewy (also page 29). PAGE 30: James Gardner, OBE, RDI, FSIA. PAGE 32: Tord Kempe; Hans Bergström (also page 33). PAGE 33: Karin and Nisse Strinning; Alf Svensson; Gunnar Myrstrand; Sven Engström; Carl-Axel Acker. PAGE 34: Hulme Chadwick, ARCA, MSIA; Ronald Bell-Scott; Mary Tindall, ARIBA; Margery Benson Harris.

Acknowledgments

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In spite of its endeavours to do so, GRAPHIS magazine is unable to accommodate all the advertising material that comes up to the standard which, during the past eight years, it has successfully established. It was decided, therefore, to embark on the publication of the GRAPHIS ANNUAL, the contents of which will be different from the material already published in the magazine. There are a few exceptions (amounting to less than 10% of the whole) of work without which the ANNUAL could not be called complete. The GRAPHIS ANNUAL is edited by Walter Herdeg and Charles Rosner. With its complete coverage of the whole world's best advertising art during each current year, it is an indispensable part of the equipment of every art director, art-buyer - and designer.



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Reply, stating qualifications, experience and age, quoting reference PM/D/27, to Personnel Manager, Joseph Lucas Ltd, Great King Street, Birmingham.

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SCOTTISH CRAFTS OF ST NINIANS, STIRLING, will present an Exhibition and Sale at the Tea Centre, 22 Regent Street, London SW1 from December 2-13. A rich choice of pottery, jewellery, textiles, light fittings, engraved glass, silver, Shetland knitwear, woodware and toys from Scotland's foremost craftsmen will be available to Christmas shoppers. The exhibition will be open on December 1 to trade buyers only.

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CLASSIFIED advertisements (continued from page 37)

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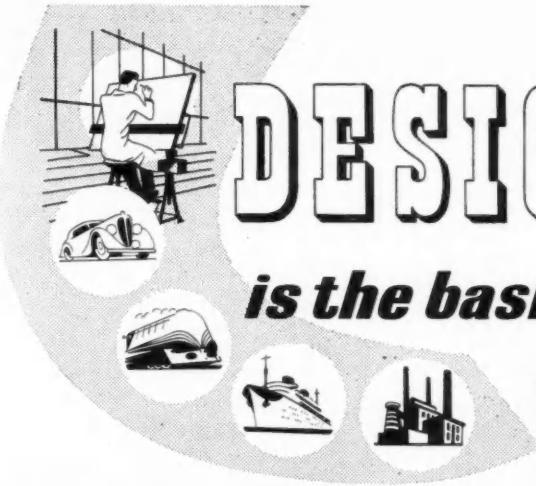


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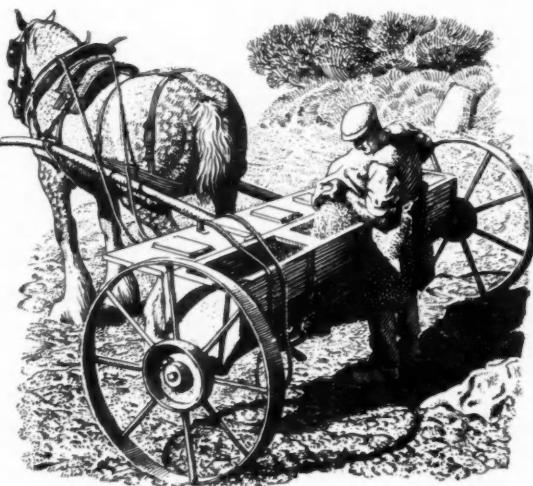
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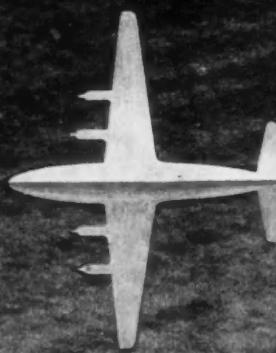
steel making. The element exists in several forms, the two most important being "yellow" phosphorus, a white, wax-like poisonous solid that catches fire when exposed to air, and "red" phosphorus, a non-poisonous powder used in the striking compound on safety-match boxes. Compounds of phosphorus are used in medicine and for purposes as different as water softening and the rust-proofing of steel.

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